



WSBA

Diversity Committee Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2020

12 PM – 1:30 PM

Conference Call 1-866-577-9294 | Access Code 52680

The Washington State Bar Association's Diversity Committee is dedicated to implementing WSBA's Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The work of the committee promotes historically underrepresented groups to enter and stay in the profession of law. The Diversity Committee does this through collaborative relationships and community building activities, which highlight the numerous societal benefits of a diverse law profession.

Members present: Laura Johnson, Nam Nguyen, Gov. Jean Kang, Allison Ross, Gov. Alec Stephens, Laura Wulf, Yuping Wang, Andrea Jarmon, Lisa Mansfield, Gov. Sunitha Anjilvel, Serena Sayani, Carly Summers

Members absent: Gov. Hunter Abell, Chelsea Brisbois,

Guest: Leslie Ashly

Staff: Dana Barnett, Diana Singleton

1. Call to Order, Welcome and Approval of Minutes–

Laura Wulf called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM. Allison Ross moved to approve the February minutes. Lisa Mansfield seconded. The committee unanimously approved the minutes

2. BOG Report (LLLT, BOG At-large) – Jean Kang, Co-Chair

Jean Kang shared information with the committee on the highlights of the April, and May BOG meetings. On April 3rd the Supreme Court approved a group of bylaw amendments put forward by the Board, a Covid-19 response group was approved, MCLE credit reporting was extended for one year, Supreme Court granted Diploma Privilege, and the Supreme court voted to sunset the LLLT program.

Jean shared that at the upcoming June meeting the Board will vote on a new BOG at-Large member, to take the place of Governor Alec Stephens. The committee discussed the importance of having the seat, which is supposed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion be filled by someone who promotes racial equity and shifts the racial composition of the board. The committee discussed many reasons for this, particularly in this moment when the country is overtly struggling with issues of historic and systemic racism, and state sanctioned violence against Black people. Committee members raised the importance that the person in this seat is willing to reach out the Minority Bar Associations and represent their interests. It was also pointed out that there is a burden of being a person of color on the board, that the person who sits on the board needs to both be committed to the values of equity and inclusion, but also willing to speak up for them.

Alec will write something explicit to this point which will be added as a bullet point in the committee's memo to the Board of Governors.

3. Responding to the moment – in support of Black lives -

Laura Wulf led a conversation about a proposal / memo from the Diversity Committee to the Board of Governors. The memo shares the committee's support for the task force that President Majumdar is proposing, and goes further asking the Board to make specific commitments to promote racial equity on the Board and within the WSBA. Serena motioned to approve the proposal, with the addition of Alec's paragraph about the BOG At-large seat. Sunitha seconded the motion, and it was then approved by the full committee.

4. MBA Scholarship Grants –

Dana shared that the budget for the Diversity programs is underspent due to cancelled in-person events and programs. After speaking with three MBA leaders, Dana and Diana are proposing that the money, which would have gone to MBA banquet tickets and events with the MBAs, be transferred into a fund to support MBA scholarships for law students and recent graduates. Sunitha moved that the Diversity Committee support using the remaining Diversity Program budget to create a grant for MBA scholarships. Carly seconded the motion. A majority of the committee voted to support this proposal, with Governor Alec Stephens abstaining.

5. MCLE rule change (new proposal by MCLE Board) –

The committee chairs shared that they met with the Chair of the MCLE board. The MCLE board is planning to propose to the board of Governors to reconsider the mandatory Ethics credit in diversity and elimination of bias, this time as a standalone proposal, without the additional two credits for technology and mental health. The committee added a bullet with support for this proposal in its memo to the BOG.

The below topics were tabled for the July meeting:

- a. Beyond the Dialogue – Postponed to August 13th Transphobia and Trans inclusion in the legal profession. Dana
- b. Legal Lunchbox – March program on Hate Groups, June program deferred, September program still on topic for discussion - Dana
- c. ARC Reception, canceled for this July, considering folding into potential fall programming with SU – Need to think through student programs during Covid-19 and beyond - Dana

6. MBA Updates and Reports – Tabled for July meeting

7. Announcements – Tabled for the July meeting

8. Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM

Next Meeting: July 15, 2020 Conference call